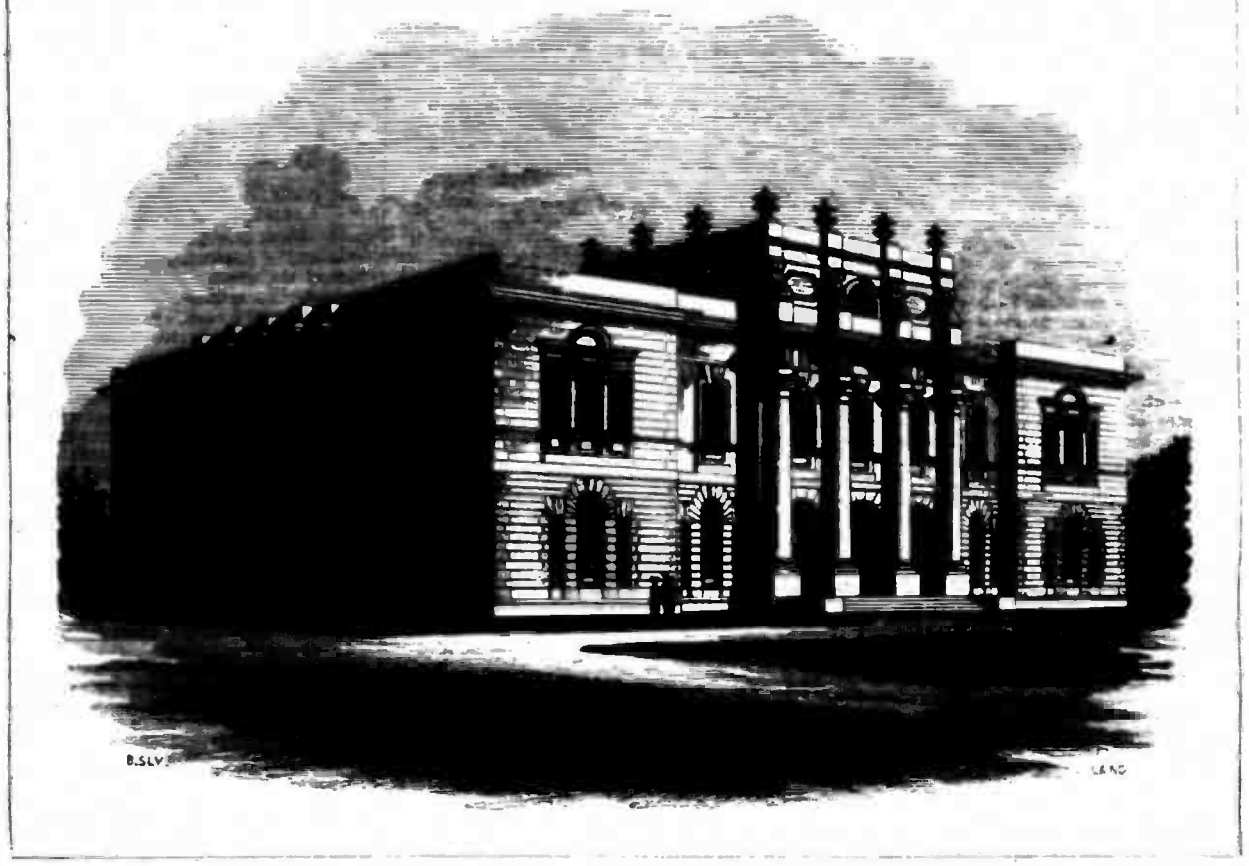
PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE, BELFAST.—Mr. C. Lanyon, Architect.†



must refer you for a full account of this legend, merely dwelling, with your permission, upon one or two points, in order to show that the painting by Murillo, lately in the possession of Marshal Soult, is a representation of this subject.

The legend asserts that the soul of the Virgin, immediately after death, was received into heaven, but that the body was not raised until three days had passed. A great distinction has been made in the pictorial treatment of the two assumptions, that of the soul and that of the body, the former being generally represented nearly nude, slightly enveloped in linen, or scarcely shrouded by a veil.* In the assumption of the body, however, the Virgin is always clothed in her robe of purple or of blue: the sun's rays surround her form: the moon is under her feet: if crowned, twelve stars shine above her head, and her ascension is accompanied by the acclamation of angels and of saints. The source of this idea is evidently in the 12th of Revelations: on the day of the Assumption, still celebrated by the Roman and Eastern churches, this chapter serves as a text for the anthem, "Mulier amicta sole, et luna sub pedibus ejus, et in capite ejus corona stellarum duodecim." This is a correct description of the picture by Murillo, now in the National Collection at Paris, which should therefore be called the "Assumption," not the "Conception" of the Virgin. Robert Hendrie.

Match-making. — A new machine for splitting the timber used in making matches, has lately been introduced at Augusta, Ga. It splits with ease twenty thousand a minute, or one million an hour, and turns them out ready to be dipped. Mammas will say it is much better a split should precede a match than follow it.

* Such license has been taken by some of the artists, that this figure frequently degenerated into the similitude of a Pagan Venus, justifying the appellation given to this creation by Petrarch of "the Christian goddess."

† See page 496, in present number.

OXFORD INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS COMPETITION.

In the month of February last, the guardians of the poor for the united parishes of this city (Oxford), advertised, inviting architects to furnish them with plans for industrial schools, which it was proposed to erect at the village of Cowley, some mile or so distant from the town. The sum to which architects were restricted in their designs was 2,000*l.* which was eventually raised to 2,500*l.*; and for this sum accommodation for 200 children was to be provided, an infirmary built, and farm buildings, workshops, and the requisite offices for such schools erected. Of the plans sent in that of Mr. G. E. Bruton, of Oxford, was accepted, received the sanction of the Poor-law Commissioners, and in May last was thrown open to the trade to contract for its erection.

Nine estimates were sent in, but all exceeding the sum at the disposal of the guardians,—four of them exceeding 5,000*l.* each, and the lowest (with one exception) exceeding 3,700*l.* The board rejected all the tenders, and issued an advertisement for fresh plans.

In reply to this three designs were sent in. Two were new, or *fresh plans*, in accordance with the terms of the advertisement: the third consisted of the identical drawings which had previously been submitted by Mr. Bruton, with the exception of the elevation, which was absent: it had been Elizabethan, but its place was now supplied by a drawing exhibiting a front of the plainest possible description. Upon the plans, also, a contraction, to the extent of 14 feet in the frontage, was marked in red ink; the scantling of the timbers was reduced; and other alterations marked so as to bring the cost of erection within the sum allotted. And thus matters stood till the board met to decide which of the plans submitted they would adopt.

At this meeting Mr. Piggott, from the Poor-law Commission, attended, and explained that the former plans having received the seal and sanction of the commissioners, it was not in the power of the guardians to revoke the decision of the commissioners; and that these plans must be carried out in their integrity, or subject to such alterations only as the commissioners should permit. Competition being at an end,—the re-acceptance of the originally-adopted design being an imperative alternative,—the board were divested of the power to consider any of the fresh plans sent in; and may it not, therefore, be successfully urged that they are actionable for compensation to be recovered by those architects who forwarded plans according to the terms of the advertisement?

Justice.

*** The guardians acted with great want of consideration, but to bring an action against them would simply be a waste of money. Apart from other difficulties in the way, the fact that the selected architect was a competitor on the second occasion would of itself, probably, relieve them.

THE LEEDS TOWN-HALL COMPETITION.

The instructions to architects on this occasion are more formidable than inviting; in fact, amount almost to a direct *noli me tangere*, when the absurdly short time allowed for planning the works and preparing the numerous drawings required (only two months), and the mere remuneration which is all that is promised to the successful competitor, are taken into consideration. There is something staggering even in the very first article of the instruction, since it asks for a hall for public meeting capable of containing no fewer than eight thousand persons standing! Its area, therefore, can hardly be at all less than 12,000 square feet; consequently were its breadth 60 feet its length must be 200 feet,* dimensions nearly equal to those of Westminster-hall; and as, to be in tolerable proportion, its height could hardly be less than 50 feet, that single room alone would swallow up the whole of the sum named as that to which the

* Unless galleries be admitted.

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